

As For Myself - TO TRAINS



The above was taken during the grand opening of the Lithuanian Studies Institute on October 17 at the St. Casimir's Academy Hall, Chicago. Vyt Beliajus opened the series with a dissertation on folk dancing, Lithuanian and others. Seen above (l to r) are Sister M. Perpetus, Jack Jatis who is active in the Knights of Lithuania circles and a VILTIS buddy, Mother M. Immaculata, P. Maldeikis, Rev. V. Bagdanavičius the director of the Institute, Prof. Vyt Manelis, Leonard Šimutis editor of the Lith. Catholic Daily Draugas, Rev. Dr. Juozas Prunskis. Rev. Prof. J. Beleckas of Loyola University, Vyt Beliajus and Č. Grincevičius.

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Here it is mid-March, still chilly and nasty in most of the U.S.A. while I bask in sunshine. Winter bypassed Southern Cal. and believe you me, I didn't miss it at all. On my trips to Los Angeles, I saw snow on the mountains far, far away, and that's how I liked it, snow far, far away. I prefer the warmth, the sunshine, lovely sunsets which I can watch from my window or porch, flowers and bushes in bloom, orange groves and banana trees bearing fruit, palm fronds swaying in the breeze and green carpeting the ground all year around. That's living. That snow, slush, mud and all other "tsores" is good enough for those who think "it's real George" but I'd rather stay here and be "comfee."

This Catalán issue reminds me how my interest in them was first deeply roused about 1946 by Jimmy Graham, who spent several years in Catalonia with the Friends' Service Committee. He came back with a large collection of Catalan and Spanish records and with a terrific enthusiasm for Sardanas which he demonstrated. He had all his records in the car, and that night, probably thinking that he was still in Barcelona, instead of Chicago, someone broke into his car and cleared him out of his clothes and records. Since then, I had been unable to obtain Sardana records. Some years later, I met a lad, Seymour Adelman, of Toronto, Canada, who likewise spent some time among the French Catalans and belonged to one of their folkloric groups and he too brought back the Ball Variety of dances, of which the Espunyolet was one. Now, I met Commander Bill Francis and his wife Ginger, who are Sardana enthusiasts, and they had records! Thanks to them we have a Catalán issue.

I've had my quarterly check-up and X-ray and the doctor was very pleased with the whole picture. According to him, I'm a "healthy man", and now I can have my check-ups every six months, which is good news.

The establishing for financial gain has thus far been

a difficult one. I've been living mostly on my piggy bank. The moving over and settling down was rather an expensive deal, especially when one arrives cold to a place where no pre-arrangements for jobs were made. Of all places, I moved into a hot bed of square dancing, where folk dancing, if anyone is interested, can get it for nix with the Park System. My Trianon venture is just that, but it is building up and as everything else, it takes time, especially when one tries to build up something without publicity. I've had isolated jobs in Los Angeles and here and there. My spring and summer are most promising and they'll be my "good months". By next year the picture will be greatly improved. I'll not be a newcomer anymore, but an established native. I do not regret making my move to this part of the country. I love it here very much and I'm happy beyond words for having made this choice. Perhaps in due time, this will become the folk dance center as is the Bay Area at the present. It's a challenge.

Otherwise, "all is quiet on the Western Front". I'll close with my sincerest wishes for a joyous Holy Easter season to all our Gentile readers and a Happy Passover with plenty Matsoh balls to our Jewish readers.

Pasimatysim
VYTS-FIN



Mrs. Frank W. Brand

Condolences are extended to Mrs. Wm. Francis upon the death of her mother, after a lingering illness, on February 4th.

February did not start off too brightly for the Francis clan. Soon after the death of mother, Ginger (Mrs. Wm.), had to go to the hospital for an emergency operation. We are happy to report that she passed through her ordeal with flying colors and is recuperating nicely and we shall soon see her again amid our folk dancers. Stay well, cover girl.

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ESPUNYOLET

(Ess-poo-nyo-let)
Catalan Wedding Dance
V. F. BELIAJUS

This is a type of dance which the Catalans classify as the "Ball De Ceremonia". It is a ritualistic dance with a solemn sequence and a rapid repeat. This particular dance seems to be much more popular among the Catalans on the French side where it is spelled Espougolette and pronounced just as above.

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MUSIC: Folkraft F 1120 A. The record is not too excellent. The slow part is a bit too slow, the kneeling sections a bit too outdrawn and the fast part should have never been repeated as it makes that part anti-climatic. The recorders wanting to fill the whole record decided to be generous and repeated the fast part. It is suggested that once the whole sequence of the fast part is done the first time and after the final bow, terminate the dance. This is the only make available and it is a workable record.

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Starting position. Partners face. Girl's hand on skirt (or hip). The first preferred. Man's hands raised head high. Right foot free.

FIGURE 1

Meas. 1: Step on R foot across in front of L, turning body slightly to L (Ct. 1), step on L in place (2), step on R returning it to place next to L (3). Step on L foot across in front of R, turning body slightly to R (4), step on R in place (5), step on L foot returning next to R (6). Repeat pattern of Meas. 1 (R, L, R, L). REVERENCE. Bow and curtsy to each other (six counts). During the reverence the man joins his hands behind his back like in the manner of Mexican dances. Repeat entire pattern of Meas. 1-4.

Meas. 2-3
Meas. : Partners with right shoulders adjacent, fold right hands over each other's forearm. Step forward on R foot, rocking forward and transferring weight onto right foot (1), step on ball of L foot next to heel of R (2), step on R foot in place (3). Step forward on L foot, rocking forward and transferring weight onto L foot (4), step on ball of R foot next to heel of L (5), step on L foot in place (6). Repeat pattern of Meas 1 (R, L, R, L), taking small steps, making one-half circle. Finish in partner's place.

Meas. 12: REVERENCE. Bow and curtsy to each other (six counts).

Meas. 13-16: Repeat entire pattern of Meas. 9-12 with L hands folded over each other's forearm, returning to original places.

FIGURE 3
Meas. 17: Partners join both hands. Girl kneels on R knee, bows head, then rises.
Meas. 18: Boy kneels, bows and rises (The music in these measures retards).
Meas. 19-20: Four waltz steps turning under joined hands and exchanging places with partner (Dish-rag figure). The raised hands in this case are the boy's R and girl's L. Finish with a reverence at end of last

measure.

Meas. 21-24: Repeat entire figure of "Dish-rag", returning to original places, continuing to rotate in a clockwise direction.

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Repeat entire dance at a faster tempo. During measures 1-3 and 6-7, the man only snaps his fingers.

BOOK REVIEWS

FORTY FAVORITE FOLK DANCES, Rod La Farge, 115 Cliff Street, Paterson 2, N.J. 48 pages. \$1.50.

Rod La Farge, through his quarterly "Rosin the Bow," is the supplier for the Californians of the various Tarantellas, to which the Californians in particular are so very susceptible. Some of these Tarantellas and also Greek, Magyar and other dances, 40 in all, which appeared in Rosin and Bow during the past 8 years, are now gathered in one handy collection. It has no music and it is for record users only. The descriptions are not only ample but he enters in detail to give an honest account of the source of his material which very few notators do. Many of his dances are versions, that is, they are in the collection because they differ somewhat from what others are doing, as a result, his book is not just a rehashing but a good addition to a collection even though one may already have some of those dances. It is a good buy.

FOLK DANCE SYLLABUS NO. 1, Michael Herman. 108 W. 16th St., New York 11, N.Y. 82 pages. Typewritten Offset with drawings. (\$2.00)

This is a generous collection of 70 folk dances, 15 contras and seven squares. Nearly all, except for some Welsh and one Kolo, everything is a rehash of well known dances used everywhere and in many other collections, over and over. There is a 26 page publicity stunt included about the Main Camp with a gossip section, which is somewhat useless for a collection like this and out of place. The foreign menus in that section, though, are valuable. The book is too, in a way, that is if you already don't have any other book. And 92 dances is a wealth of material. It is attractively put together.

I would like to take Michael to task on his insistence upon calling Aleksandrovsk with a "Y" at the end. I would have been best had he not tried to add the note at the end. Otherwise he used no notes on background anywhere, except on this one. Originally Michael called that dance by its rightful name, then he changed his mind. He discovered that it was a "waltz" and as any "Russian" knows Waltzes are "Masculine." First of all, the dance is not called "Vals Alekandrovsky," but plain "Aleksandrovsk," just like no one calls "Pas D'Espan," "Vals Padespansky, but Pas D'Espan (or whatever spelling), and as Michael well knows, practically every blessed Russian dance has a feminine name: Kamarinskaja, Kokhanotchka, Lizginka, Tsinganothchka, Polyanka, Barnya. What's wrong with Aleksandrovsk? Even in Israel where the dance was brought by Russian Jews it is called by its feminine. This is always the case when one gets dances second and third hand. I've done this dance since childhood among hoi polloi and "entre nous" and it was called "Aleksandrovsk" as any Russian knows. And as in the past, Michael will just have to discover the "new authentic way" of calling or doing the dance and changing it. Fortunately, at least Michael Herman, upon learning the truth, always changes, and that is a very praiseworthy merit, for Michael Herman, is truly very conscientious and is very willing to do the right thing and teach the right way. This goes to his credit.